



Pontificium Consilium De Spirituali Migrantium Atque Itinerantium Cura

7th World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants

Rome, November 17th – 21st, 2014

Theme: «Cooperation and Development in the Pastoral Care of Migrations»

FINAL DOCUMENT

I. THE EVENT

1. The 7th World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants took place from Monday, November 17th to Friday, November 21st, 2014, in the Aula Magna of the Pontifical Urbaniana University, located at Via Urbano VIII, n. 16, Vatican City. The theme of the Congress was “*Cooperation and Development in the Pastoral Care of Migrations*”.

2. The Congress gathered together 284 participants from all five continents, and from more than 90 countries from around the world. Among the delegates were Cardinals and the Maronite Patriarch of Antioch, archbishops, bishops, priests, men and women religious, members of Secular Institutes, lay pastoral agents, as well as many representatives from different Catholic ecclesial and lay movements or associations. Among the participants were six Fraternal Delegates, who came from the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Romanian Orthodox Patriarchate, the Orthodox Church of Greece, the Anglican Communion, the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches.

3. The Congress was inaugurated solemnly by His Eminence, Card. Antonio Maria Vegliò, President of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, in the presence of the Honorable Angelino Alfano, Minister of the Interior of the Italian government, honorable Ambassadors and representatives from the diplomatic missions accredited to the Holy See in Rome, Dr. Francesca Di Giovanni representing the Secretary of State – II Section for Relations with States with a statement, members of international and non-governmental Organizations, including Guest Speaker His Excellency Ambassador William Lacy Swing, Director General of the International Organization for Migration, experts, and representatives of organizations directly or indirectly involved in the material and spiritual welfare of migrants.

4. The Congress was designed to dedicate each day to a different topic within the wider context of the theme of this Event. The methodology of each day was structured so as to culminate, through the different conferences and further debates that elaborated on

the key note addresses (e.g.: round tables), in the personal exchange and the expression of concrete ideas and thoughts in the Working Groups of the afternoon.

5. The first day of the Congress, Tuesday, November 18th, 2014, was inaugurated by the celebration of Holy Mass at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter's Basilica, presided over by His Eminence, Cardinal Antonio Maria Vegliò, President of the Pontifical Council. The proceedings of the day were dedicated to the subject of the **diaspora**, in particular the labor migration of workers - a phenomenon characteristic of so many different nations around the globe. The Main Conference of the day was delivered by His Eminence Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Archbishop of Manila and Member of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, on the subject of "*Diaspora and Cooperation: Towards the Development of the World and of the Church*". Within the context of the Main Conference on the diaspora arises an important subject often affected by labor migration, that is, that of the family, which was the center of attention for the first Round Table of the Congress entitled "*The Migrant Family in the Context of the Diaspora*". To discuss and share their insight on the matter for the Round Table were three guest speakers from three different cultural backgrounds: His Excellency Bishop John Charles Wester of Salt Lake City (USA), His Excellency Bishop Lucio Andrice Muandula of Xai-Xai (Mozambique), and His Excellency Bishop Mario Toso, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (Holy See). The Round Table was moderated by Mons. Domenico Pompili, Under-Secretary of the Italian Bishops' Conference (Italy).

6. Continuing the reflections on cooperation and development in the pastoral care of migrations, the keyword for the second full-day of proceedings (Wednesday, November 19th, 2014) was **partner**. To deliver the Main Conference, entitled "*Migrants as Partners in the Development of Countries of Origin, of Transit and of Destination*", was Dr. Johan Ketelers, Secretary General of the International Catholic Migration Commission (Switzerland) and Consultor of the Pontifical Council. The concept of "partner" was continued in the discussions of the second Round Table of the Congress, which took into consideration the role of women migrants and was entitled "*The Role of Women Migrants in Cooperation and Development*". Three guest speakers, Sr. Patricia Ebegbulem from Lagos (Nigeria), Coordinator of the African Network Against Human Trafficking, Dr. Martina Liebsch, Advocacy and Policy Director of *Caritas Internationalis* (Holy See), and Sr. Rosita Milesi from Brasília (Brazil), Director of the Migration and Human Rights Institute (*Instituto Migrações e Direitos Humanos*) led the debate, moderated by Dr. Angela Ambrogetti, journalist and director of *www.korazym.org* (Italy).

7. The third full-day of proceedings of the Congress, Thursday, November 20th, 2014, was dedicated to the subject of **migrant dignity**. Leading the Main Conference, entitled "*The Dignity of the Migrant - a Child of God, Created in His Image and Likeness, Who Bears the Image of Christ the Migrant*", was His Excellency Archbishop Silvano M. Tomasi, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations Office of Geneva (Switzerland). The third Round Table turned its attention to the subject of young migrants and their role in society and in the Church. The three guest speakers, who elaborated and debated on the subject of "*Young Migrants: Potential in Building Bridges of Cooperation Between Societies Towards Development*", were: His Excellency Archbishop José Domingo Ulloa Mendieta, Archbishop of Panama City (Panama) and President of S.E.D.A.C.; His Excellency Bishop Barthélemy Adoukonou, Secretary of the Pontifical Council for Culture (Holy See); and

Reverend Father Maurizio Pettenà, National Director of the Australian Catholic Migrant & Refugee Office in Canberra (Australia) and Consultor of the Pontifical Council.

8. Throughout the Congress, the participants were given the opportunity to listen and watch short presentations prepared by eleven Bishops' Conferences from around the world, as well as to listen to the testimony of Dr. Maria De Lourdes Jesus, a journalist from Rome, who shared her personal history and experience of migration from the Republic of Cabo Verde and integration into Italian society. These moments were an opportunity to experience and to witness, at least in some small form, the richness and variety that the Catholic Church offers in its pastoral care of migrants.

9. The Congress concluded on Friday, November 21st, 2014, with an audience with His Holiness, Pope Francis. After the presentation of the Final Press Release and the Closing Discourse of His Eminence Cardinal Antonio Maria Vegliò, President of the Pontifical Council, in the Pontifical Urbaniana University's Aula Magna, the participants moved to the Apostolic Palace, where the Holy Father received them at 12 noon. Addressing the participants of the Congress, Pope Francis noted that those who migrate hope for a better future for their families, even at the risk of disappointment and failure. Migrants are able to fulfil the desire for a better future for themselves and their families, yet at the same time, there also exist problems that accompany these benefits. The Church must remain a source of hope for migrants, who many times experience disappointment, distress and loneliness. Invoking the intercession of the Holy Family, who experienced exile in Egypt, the Holy Father imparted his Apostolic Blessing on all those present.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The goal of the 7th World Congress for the Pastoral Care of Migrants was to take into consideration the phenomenon of migration, with a particular consideration concerning economic migrants. This notwithstanding, the participants wish to acknowledge the existence of mixed migration flows, which can also consist of refugees, internally displaced persons, climate migration, etc., as well as the difficulty that exists, at times, in clearly distinguishing between these movements.

However, in the light of the goal of the Event, the participants of the 7th World Congress affirm that:

1. Migration continues to be a sign of the times, in which the centrality of the human person and human dignity are of ever greater importance.

2. Development signifies a dynamic process, which implies growth, advancement, empowerment and progress, and whose ultimate goal is to increase human capabilities, to enlarge the scope of human choices, and to create a safe and secure environment in which all inhabitants of a country may live and work and worship, with dignity and equality in both civil and ecclesial contexts.

3. The human dignity of each and every migrant is paramount. Religious, ethnic, social or cultural variables, citizenship or lack of it, do not change this fact that gives each individual an inherent and immeasurable worth and dignity, in which every human life is and must be considered sacred.

4. Benefits that can come from migrants are far greater than solely the economic factors, and are gained not only by the receiving countries, but by the countries of origin, and in some cases for the communities of transit, as well.

5. The transit of migrants carries particular relevance. It is more than just the simple relationship between the departure and arrival of migrants, but a source of some of the difficulties that migrants experience.

6. There is an unfortunate tendency for Church communities and organizations to work in isolation, creating a void that may leave the migrant vulnerable to the violation of their rights, and being a source of difficulties in the creation of adequate pastoral programs within the Church of arrival (including the proclamation of the Gospel, the formation to the reception of the Sacraments, evangelization, and the interiorization of Christian values and concepts).

7. The personal faith and popular piety of migrants is an expression of their personal experience of the Christian faith, and is a link between the Church of departure and that of arrival. Integration implies neither artificial separation nor assimilation, but rather gives the opportunity to identify the migrant's cultural heritage, and to recognize their gifts and talents for the common good of the entire Church community.

8. Modern migration policies tend to emphasize the individual dimension of a person's decision to migrate, concentrating on the work aspect of migration rather than taking into consideration the migrant family. In fact, national migration policy is often one of the causes behind family separation and the breakdown of familial relationships that can ensue.

9. The migrant family often finds itself between the experience of uprooting from the place of origin on the one hand and the lack of integration in the new society on the other, which creates a sort of tension that has a destructive force on both individual members and on the entire family.

10. The issue of family separation, caused by imperfect migration systems, is of utmost concern/importance for the pastoral care of migrants, particularly regarding those countries that have a large diaspora.

11. The pastoral care of migrants must take into consideration the distinction between first, second and third generations, each having its own specific characteristics and difficulties.

12. Women migrants can be recognized today not only as dependents, or part of the family reunification process, but as independent agents, family supporters and/or strategists. Migration may be an important instrument/opportunity of empowerment for women.

13. Young migrants require a social environment that permits and fosters their physical, cultural, spiritual and moral development.

14. There are three areas in which young migrants most vividly build bridges between societies as they engage with the people they live and work alongside: through their relationships with others, their education, and their working life.

15. Sects continue to grow as a particular challenge within the pastoral care of migrants, particularly with regard to younger generations.

16. In the broader context of migration, in which a vast majority of modern-day migrants are either not Catholic or not Christian, ecumenical cooperation and interreligious dialogue are of utmost importance.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The participants, in view of the conclusions drawn from the 7th World Congress, wish to declare their commitment to put into action the following recommendations:

1. The particular Church communities should work together to create a common and humane approach to issues and difficulties that migration carries with it (which can include working with Bishops' Conferences, governments, non-governmental organizations, and faith-based organizations), to protect the rights of migrants and to prevent human trafficking, exploitation and other similar crimes. Insisting on working within social networks (which begins with the simple exchange of contact details, such as email addresses, telephone numbers, Skype details and addresses of pastoral agents for migrants) can strengthen a more widespread pastoral care.

2. Those charged with the mission of teaching within the Church will make an effort to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the Magisterium of the Church regarding migration which, in turn, has the capacity of turning theory into practice at the local level.

3. The pastors of the Church must speak with one voice regarding migration. The Church is a prophetic voice for the proper integration of migrants in receiving communities, keeping in mind the universality of the ecclesial Catholic community, which entails a pastoral approach that is more comprehensive and goes beyond solely the charitable aspect.

4. The Church can make better use of media to enhance migrant rights. The raising of awareness at the local parish level, the encouragement to vote for justice and equality, the creation of study centers and publications has the capacity to change the narrative on migration. Public opinion should be properly informed regarding the true situation of migrants not only in the welcoming country, but also in their country of origin.

5. As the phenomenon of irregular migration is a cause for the exploitation of the migrant worker and his family, the faithful must advocate for more just and inclusive immigration policies of the Governments, which will assist in the migrant's search for job opportunities and better living conditions, safeguard the role of the family and of women, while at the same time preventing the exploitation and/or trafficking of migrants workers, and other forms of abuse.

6. The Church on all levels is a community of hope and of action, which is expressed through solidarity with migrant people, through advocacy on their behalf (particularly children and unaccompanied minors), through the raising awareness among faithful that leads to a practical commitment, through efforts to address the root causes of forced migration, and through assistance in the provision of food, shelter, medical care, and legal assistance to migrants, no matter what their status.

7. The Church at the place of origin, the Church at the place of transit, and the Church of welcome must improve communication and communion, and work together to create programs of prevention organized between the respective Bishops' Conferences.

8. The collaboration between the Church of origin and the Church of welcome should be intensified, particularly regarding the first two generations of migrants. Through the preparation of pastoral and social workers capable of serving as bridges between the two realities, this collaboration requires a dialogue between the two cultures and takes into account the specific problems of each generation.

9. All pastoral agents in the service of migrants should ensure that the voice of migrants is heard which, in turn, facilitates advocating on their behalf. The Church must ensure that their stories are recognized and appreciated.

10. Diocesan pastoral programs and initiatives regarding young migrants should concentrate on their integral formation, a part of which includes the formation to become active collaborators between their culture of origin and that of the country in which they now live. Emphasis on respecting one another's culture is necessary for a better mutual understanding.

11. Diocesan pastoral programs may consider working with local vocational schools to initiate certificate programs that could recognize and give the necessary accreditation to young migrants, so that the contribution of their skills and talents may, in turn, be an opportunity to contribute to the development of their country of origin upon their return.

12. Formational programs of priests, religious and pastoral agents should take into account the theological and pastoral dimensions of migration. Formation of both clergy and laity, therefore, requires intercultural formation, knowledge, training in dialogue and the appreciation of migrant potential, which includes their role in the new Evangelization. At the local level, this is expressed in the necessity for the formation of cultural mediators, who know how to speak the language and who understand the culture of migrants and the expression of faith that they bring with them.

13. The presence and role of lay ecclesial Movements and Associations, whose structures have the advantage of operating in a different (and at times more flexible) context than formal Church structures for the pastoral care of migrants, should be strengthened and intensified.

14. Each Conference of Catholic Bishops' or corresponding Hierarchical structure within the Oriental Churches commits to establish a particular organ (office, commission, sub-committee) that would be specifically engaged in the pastoral care of migrants, which could be a step to building a better network between Churches. The Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, in turn, could be the common point of reference or coordinating point in this specific pastoral care.